Today is Thursday the 3 September, the feast of St Gregory the Great, in the 22nd week of Ordinary Time.

The monks of the Abbey of Keur Moussa sing: ‘God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise. God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong.’ As I enter into prayer now, can I put aside any pride I may have in my own wisdom and my own strength? Can I bring myself before God who loves me and has chosen me, with all my foolishness and all my weakness?

Today’s reading is from St Paul’s First Letter to the Corinthians.

1 Corinthians 3:18-23

Do not deceive yourselves. If you think that you are wise in this age, you should become fools so that you may become wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, ‘He catches the wise in their craftiness’, and again, ‘The Lord knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are futile.’ So let no one boast about human leaders. For all things are yours, whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future—all belong to you, and you belong to Christ, and Christ belongs to God.

Today is the feast day of St Gregory the Great. Gregory became pope at the end of the 6th century at a time when Rome was being ravaged by plague and famine. A gifted administrator, he set his skills to the service of the people, organising care for those in need. This included sitting down to eat with twelve of the poor each evening. Although a leader of great reform, Gregory was the first pope to name himself ‘Servant to the servants of God’. Take a moment now to consider how you have used your gifts in the service of others. How do you respond to those in need?

The Corinthians seem to revel in their gifts and, by association, in the gifts of others. Knowing it all can feel empowering but where does that power get you? Human wisdom can get stuck on a pedestal, foolishly having nowhere else to go. Gregory the Great makes the observation ‘Wisdom is born of wonder’, and wonder brings us back to our spiritual search for relationship and belonging. What certainties may you want to let go of at this time? Ask the Lord how you may enter into the foolishness of God...

Listen to the reading again...

“all belong to you, and you belong to Christ, and Christ belongs to God.”. How does this phrase speak to you today? Share your feelings with God with open heart and mind.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.